

DEWAN : The Chief Engineer informs me that arrangements have been made to carry out all the works that have been indicated, i. e., the metalling of the road from the 40th to the 46th mile, the metalling of the portions of the road from the 13th to the 29th mile, and also the replacing of the cross-drains from the 26th to the 31st mile by culverts. The Chief Engineer says that the necessary estimates have already been prepared and sanctioned and that the works are in progress. Mr. Natesa Aiyar expects that they will be completed mostly by the end of this year.

In regard to the request for an extra roller for the metalling of the road, the Chief Engineer is not quite sure whether he could purchase an extra roller this year, because the money allotted for a roller has to be paid for the roller which was got down last year. Arrangements will, however, be made as early as possible to get an extra roller for the road.

MEMBER: Thank you, Sir.

4. Improvements to the Punalur-Vadasserikara Road.

Mr. ERIC HALL (*Member, South Travancore Planters' Association*) said that the same subject had been brought forward before and that he would be going over old ground in describing the condition of Punalur-Vadasserikara road. The member thanked the Government for the repairs which had been carried out on that road during last year, and said that, as he had travelled over the road during the past 12 or 13 years, he might be considered to be in a position to form an opinion of the adequacy of the work done on it. The road served a very large and busy district and was further the only outlet road to Punalur from the Rani valley. It was not only desirable but essential that the road should be passable at all times of the year. From the details of the road recently taken, it would be realised that some extensive repairs must be carried out if the general condition of the road was to be in any way improved. Certain sections of the road were no doubt in good order; but after all the strength of a chain was the strength of its weakest link; and if in the 30 miles of road there were stretches which were impassable for long periods in the year, the whole road became practically useless. Traffic was increasing and the tendency would be for the road to deteriorate rather than improve if extensive repairs were not carried out. Broken bullock carts and ruined produce as a result of the bad road were too common a sight, while the discomfort to any one travelling by cart to Punalur could better be imagined than described.

The first section from Punalur to 4 miles north of Pattanapuram was in fair order and ordinary maintenance should keep that section open throughout the year.

On the section 6 miles south of Koni village and on to the crossing at Kumbazha, extensive work was required if the road was to be passable during the monsoon. At present it was one long series of pot holes and surface carry-off drains. Both approaches to the ferry were in a very bad condition, no doubt as a result of the floods of last year, but that was happily past history; and while everything else had got on with the repair to flood damage, the approaches to rivers on that road had but scant attention.

From Kumbazha ferry to Mannarakulanji, the unmetalled portion was a quagmire for several months in the year. The member urged that that section might be metalled where required.

The last section of $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Mannarakulanji to Rajampara take-off was in an unsatisfactory condition. The repairs carried out from time to time were quite useless to keep the road passable during the monsoon. Outcrops of rock were to be found practically over the whole length of that section which made travelling in any conveyance dangerous. The approaches to the river at Vadasserikara required considerable repairs. It was true that metal was being broken for parts of that section; but he would request that the putting down of the metal was not unduly delayed. The two platform bridges on that section required to be widened by 3 to 4 feet as at present they just permitted of a cart going slowly over.

DEWAN: You admit that the first section of the road is in good order. In the case of the second section, portions have been metalled; and the Chief Engineer says that the work will be attended to, as funds have been allotted. In regard to the third and fourth sections, I think that the matter requires fuller investigation. Apparently, the road has been metalled only in small portions; and I would require a comprehensive estimate so as to get an idea as to what it is going to cost and what interest it is going to serve. After I get full information in regard to this matter, I shall pass such orders as are considered proper.

5. Roads and Bridges.

MR. A. J. WRIGHT (*Member, Kanan Devan Planters' Association*) began by acknowledging that the Government were fully aware of the enormous amount of the damage to communications done by the disastrous floods in July last and of the vital importance of unimpeded transport facilities to a planting district, particularly one so isolated as the High Range to which everything in the way of food-stuffs and estate supplies must be brought from outside.

His Association appreciated very fully the measures taken by the Government to restore communications and the work of a more permanent nature in progress now, but represented the urgency of making permanent the improvements, necessarily only temporary, carried out after the monsoon. Bridges, especially those erected since July last over breaches caused by the floods, called for very early attention, as otherwise there would be very grave risk of interrupted communications during the approaching monsoon. He sought an assurance from the Government that the seriousness of the position was realised and that every possible effort would be made to avoid delay.

After the submission of the detailed memorandum of subjects, work had made considerable progress, notably upon the bridges at Periavurai and at the 3rd mile, but much remained to be accomplished in the short period still available. He, therefore, urged the extreme importance of such restoration work.

DEWAN: The Chief Engineer tells me that the Periavurai bridge and the bridge at the 3rd mile of the road have been taken up and that both the works are in progress. An estimate for Rs. 12,000 was sanctioned on the 28th January, 1925, for reconstructing the Periavurai bridge and forming a diversion road. In regard to the bridge or revetment below the Kaniyamallai factory, the Subdivision Officer has submitted the necessary estimates and is awaiting orders from the Chief Engineer to start the work. As for bridges between the 9th and the 22nd miles, they will be taken up one by one, after the estimate is sanctioned in each case.

As regards the three revetments on the first mile, the Subdivision Officer has reported that they have already been completed. Of the revetments between the 9th and the 22nd miles, the Subdivision Officer says that most of the important works have already been taken up. The Chief Engineer says that, where the estimates have not been sanctioned, they will be sanctioned without delay and the works will be taken up before the monsoon. The Government are alive to the importance of the works and agree that money should be sanctioned and the works executed as soon as possible.

6. The Western Outlet Road.

MR. A. J. WRIGHT (*Member, Kanan Devan Planters' Association*) merely wished to ascertain the policy of the Government with regard to the restoration of the wrecked portions of the Western Outlet Road and with regard to the road generally.

DEWAN: I believe that a particular portion of this road, about 15 miles in length, i. e., from the 42nd to the 56th mile, has been practically destroyed by the floods and the portion lower down is being put in order. That work will soon be completed. The question of improving the road beyond the 42nd mile is not quite so